



JPRS Report

Soviet Union

Political Affairs

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A

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19980616 095

REPRODUCED BY
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
NATIONAL TECHNICAL INFORMATION SERVICE
SPRINGFIELD, VA. 22161

Soviet Union

Political Affairs

JPRS-UPA-88-061

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28 DECEMBER 1988

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**USSR Constitution Draft Laws Criticized on
Armenian National Rights**

*18000248a Yerevan KOMMUNIST in Russian
12 Nov 88 p 3*

[Article by V. Stepanyan, doctor of juridical sciences, senior scientific associate at the Armenian SSR Academy of Sciences Institute of Philosophy and Law: "More Democracy"]

[Text] The USSR draft laws submitted for national debate are undoubtedly effective proof of a desire to develop and deepen socialist democracy.

The most fundamental of the proposed changes are, in my view, the transformation of the USSR Supreme Soviet into a permanent body, the establishment of a constitutional oversight committee, and strengthening the principle whereby **officials elected or appointed by the soviets cannot hold their posts for more than two terms**. Constitutional consolidation of these provisions can be an active way to oppose usurpation of power by individual persons and to improve in a qualitative way the role of representative bodies in the mechanism of the Soviet state, and guarantee the irreversibility of perestroika. All this is obvious. Today, however, the main task may be summed up not as praising the drafts under discussion, but effective and critical analysis of them. The drafts being debated contain considerable reserves for improvement and it is important to use them to the full.

First of all serious doubts are raised concerning the advisability of, as it were, the parallel existence of two higher representative bodies of state power—the USSR Congress of People's Deputies and the USSR Supreme Soviet. The artificial nature of this proposition can be seen from a comparison of the powers of these bodies (see articles 108 and 133 of the draft law on changes and additions to the USSR Constitution), which are closely interwoven, sometimes duplicating each other. Proof of this is also provided by the fact that both bodies must promulgate acts with the same designation—laws and decrees. The difference in defining the Congress of People's Deputies as the highest body of state power in the USSR and the USSR Supreme Soviet as a standing legislative, competent and control body of state power is thus a mere formality. For the latter is nothing other than the highest body of state power if no extra "stage" is artificially constructed above it. Analysis of the powers of the USSR Congress of People's Deputies leads to the conclusion that there is in fact no problem of public or state life that could not be resolved with the same (if not greater success) by the USSR Supreme Soviet.

It is rather more complex to influence the formation of the will of the entire body of the electorate than the 2,250 USSR people's deputies. Therefore, when proclaiming the new highest body of state power—the USSR Congress of People's Deputies—the authors of the draft were

evidently pursuing a single true aim, namely, to create a unique filter with whose help it is possible effectively to influence the makeup of the real authoritative body—the USSR Supreme Soviet.

The historical experience of our state has shown that in cases in which a particular representative body of state power really exercises its functions only for a few days of the year, its activity ineluctably acquires a particularly formal character. The presence in the system of the soviets of two highest representative bodies inevitably violates the principle of elective right since the makeup of the USSR Supreme Soviet (and this will be the real body in authority) is formed not by the body of the electorate directly but by the USSR Congress of People's Deputies.

The provisions of article 109 of the draft law on changes and additions to the Constitution, and article 18 of the draft law on the election of USSR people's deputies, in accordance with which the election of people's deputies should take place not only by territorial and national-territorial electoral districts but also directly by congresses, conferences and plenums of all-union public organizations, are extremely controversial. These provisions in fact **violate the principle of the direct voting right since one-third of the makeup of the USSR Congress of People's Deputies will be elected not by citizens directly but by the representatives of the members of particular public organizations**. These provisions also violate the equal voting right (one man one vote) since members of the leading bodies of all-union public organizations will simultaneously participate in elections both in territorial and national-territorial electoral districts and as "simple" voters. And if to this we add that one deputy of the Congress will be elected according to the territorial electoral districts by about 300,000 voters, while the approximately 5,000 delegates to, for example, an all-union trade union congress, conference or plenum will elect 100 deputies, then it becomes obvious that in fact the vote of each of those delegates is in fact equal to the votes of about 6,000 "simple" voters.

Neither can this provision be saved by the argument that delegates to congresses, conferences or plenums will be voting not for themselves but while giving due consideration to the opinion of and on behalf of all the members of a given public organization. First, members of public organizations can themselves directly formulate their will more accurately and express it, and second, **it happens that voters have different numbers of votes depending on the number of public organizations of which they are members**.

It must be clearly recognized that the proposed procedure for the election of USSR people's deputies from the public organizations theoretically does not exclude the possibility that all 750 deputies from them will be, for example, Azerbaijanis from the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast or persons of non-indigenous nationality in any given union republic. By virtually

guaranteeing that the leaders of public organizations will be elected as deputies, this procedure will obviously hamper the election of representatives of republic organizations to the USSR Congress of People's Deputies. Even if the principle of choosing USSR people's deputies from public organizations is confirmed, the corresponding articles in the draft laws being debated **must be given additional clarifications in accordance with which deputies from all-union public organizations will be elected on a proportional basis relative to the numbers of members in these organizations in each all-union and autonomous republic and autonomous oblast.**

There is also another side to the question. In accordance with article 111 of the draft law on changes and additions to the USSR Constitution, deputies elected to the Congress of People's Deputies not only from national-territorial electoral districts but also from all-union public organizations will be elected to the USSR Supreme Soviet Council of Nationalities. At the same time deputies elected to the Congress from the public organizations will, according to article 10 of the law on the election of USSR deputies, receive instructions from the corresponding organizations and can be recalled by them (the new edition of article 107 of the USSR Constitution). The question is: whose interests will those deputies represent and defend in the Council of Nationalities?

It so happens, for example, that the national interests of the Armenian people or the specific interests of the population of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast in the Council of Nationalities may be also represented by deputies who, although living on the corresponding territory are legally quite independent of local voters since they are not elected by them, do not receive instructions from them and cannot be recalled by them. It is clear that this provision will in no way promote greater efficiency in their activity in the Council of Nationalities.

If the procedure for forming the USSR Supreme Soviet Council of Nationalities is, if not ideal, at least understandable (7 deputies from each union republic, 4 deputies from each autonomous republic, 2 deputies from each autonomous oblast and 1 deputy from each autonomous okrug—a total of 211 deputies who will include deputies elected from all-union public organizations and living on the corresponding territories), then the procedure for forming the Council of the Union remains a closed book. Article 111 of the draft law on changes and additions to the USSR Constitution states only that in terms of their numerical makeup the chambers should be equal. But the question arises as to whether only the representatives of one (for example, the RSFSR) or several republics can be elected to the specific makeup of the Council of the Union in office this year, or whether a specific proportional representation should be observed. It could be said that this question can be resolved by a regulation of the USSR Supreme Soviet,

which would supposedly be renewed. But, **this question has not been organized either technically or politically and it should be resolved not by regulation but by the Constitution.**

Article 117 of the draft law on changes and additions to the USSR Constitution provides that in the event of disagreement between the Council of the Union and the Council of Nationalities and when agreement cannot be reached by a second review of a matter by a joint session of the chambers, the matter will be passed for review by the USSR Congress of People's Deputies. Obviously, in a review in the Congress the votes of the 750 deputies elected from the central organs of the public organizations and dependent on the center will be decisive. In other words, in the event that any disagreement arises in the Congress of People's Deputies, the position of the Council of the Union will inevitably be supported. But this situation will violate the principle of the equality of the chambers and the very idea of the existence of a two-chamber Supreme Soviet will be lost.

The recent session of the USSR Supreme Soviet graphically showed that pro forma unanimity in the chambers of the USSR Supreme Soviet is a thing of the past. We recall the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium session of 18 July 1988 at which the then chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Presidium V.P. Orlov, reproaching the representatives of the Armenian SSR, said that the principle sealed in article 78 of the USSR Constitution had received national support during discussion of the draft constitution, including from the workers in Armenia and the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast.

It is no secret that today our people assess any constitutional changes primarily from the positions of a just solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh problem. The draft law on changes and additions to the USSR Constitution does not affect that section of the Constitution that seals the national-state structure of the USSR. Changes in that section will evidently be made after the CPSU Central Committee plenum devoted to the national question. However, it is understandable that all sections of the Constitution are closely interrelated. And the changes and additions being discussed today may exert a not inconsiderable, one might even say program, effect on the further course of constitutional development. On this plane a certain optimism is to be found in paragraph 10 of article 113 of the draft, in which it is pointed out that the Supreme Soviet considers the most important questions of national and inter-nation relations. But this is all.

In general the authors of the draft have, in our view, failed to overcome the old approaches in solving problems that arise in the sphere of inter-nation relations. Proof of this is found in paragraphs 2 and 3 of article 108 of the draft, according to which the USSR Congress of People's Deputies only confirms the formation of new autonomous republics and autonomous oblasts within the union republics. **As before, the fate of the national**

statehood of one people will depend on decisions by higher bodies of state power in another nation. This kind of approach to resolution of the problem can hardly be considered totally socialist or as responding to the task of guaranteeing real equality for the peoples of the USSR. It is clear that this provision needs to be decisively reconsidered.

Chebrikov Addresses 'Dvigatel' Workers in Estonia

18000199 Tallinn SOVETSKAYA ESTONIYA
in Russian 13 Nov 88 pp 2,3

[Article by V. Itkin and L. Sher: "The Main Task—Consolidation: V. M. Chebrikov's Visit to the 'Dvigatel' Plant"]

[Text] As was reported earlier, while in our republic CPSU Central Committee Secretary V. M. Chebrikov, a member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo, visited the State All-Union "Dvigatel" Plant imeni V. I. Lenin on 11 November.

V. M. Chebrikov began his familiarization with one of the largest machine building enterprises on our republic's territory with a visit to its shops. Its name frequently appears in newspaper columns and in television and radio broadcasts as a result of the great social activity of the labor collective. Plant director V. Yarovoy conducted the tour. He described the state of the affairs at the enterprise and its collective's participation in solving the problems facing the country, the republic and Tallinn.

Then a meeting with party activists and representatives of the labor collective was held in the Red Nook of one of the shops. It was opened by V. Yarovoy. He noted as a supplement to the description of the plant given during the tour of the shops that judging from the results of 9 months of the year, "Dvigatel" had lost ground. This was explained in particular by a serious shortage of personnel.

Enterprise party committee secretary Ye. Sidorenko added that the plant's party organization is one of the republic's largest, and this imposes considerable responsibility on it for the state of affairs not only at the plant. Many interesting ideas and proposals on the prospects for development of production and the social sphere were stated in the recent party election meetings and the party conference. But problems that trouble all residents of Estonia today took center stage. Communists and the entire collective of the enterprise worked actively to establish their own positions and their own views on what was happening. Meetings were held with representatives of different social movements, with the creative intelligentsia and with party workers. The enterprise's laborers turned to the mass media several times. Nonetheless, the elections showed that anxiety for the state of

affairs has not disappeared from among the plant's communists, because they still have not received answers to many of their questions.

"In that dynamic, rapidly changing situation which evolved in the republic," said plant party committee member S. Pasko, we tried to be on the forward edge, to help the Estonian Communist Party Central Committee and the capital's party committee with all of our strength. Our proposals were always constructive, they were devoid of extremism, and we kept our egos out of them. We met with practically all of the republic's leaders, to whom we expressed our concern chiefly with the national dissidence that has come to exist in the Estonian population. National dissidence in the republic's party organization evokes even greater alarm. But we have not always been correctly heard and understood. We suddenly noticed that the voice of our party organization, the voice of the workers was no longer being heard. For example a resolution of our party conference sent to the mass media never was published, despite all of our attempts. It seems to us that the critical situation that has evolved in the republic is associated in many ways with the mass media—they have slipped completely from the control of party organs. The leaders of the party organs have finally started appearing before the people and the collectives, and speaking to them. But unfortunately, there is usually nothing for them to say. They do not know what their own position is, they are unable to motivate, they do not have their own point of view. This is the second thing that divides us and exacerbates the situation, and it seems now that it is being exacerbated deliberately. The discussion of draft laws on amendments to the Constitution and elections of deputies are nonconstructive, and rather than seeking constructive proposals, these draft laws are simply being rejected. It is not yet too late to correct the situation, but this requires the Estonian Communist Party Central Committee and all of the republic's party committees, primary party organizations and communists to assume a firm position."

Shop trade union committee chairman V. Vasilyev began his statement with a question: What is restructuring?

"Reading our local newspapers," he noted, "I can't help thinking that this is political anarchy, or more precisely, a lack of political discipline.

"If we are to make use of democracy, we need to grow up to its level, and yet the press sometimes carries statements by persons who have not yet grown up but who wish to ride the wave of restructuring into the state superstructure, giving no thought to the fact that what the superstructure needs primarily is a dependable foundation. This is why we ask this question in the fourth year of restructuring: What precisely is restructuring?"

"Prior to April of this year," said M. Donets, secretary of one of the shop party organizations, "it never even came into my mind that I am a second-rate person. What is happening now in Estonia is an insult to the working man. Rather than solving economic problems we have taken on something beyond our power. We have published a draft language law from which, we are persuaded, only the Russian-speaking bureaucracy will suffer. But this draft is very antidemocratic, and it threatens our future and the future of our children in Estonia."

Shop party organization deputy secretary M. Rakov, party committee member V. Cychugov, plant Komsomol committee deputy secretary S. Samarin and others who spoke at the meeting supported these ideas, saying that the Estonian Communist Party Central Committee has still not voiced its assessment of the program documents of social movements; many statements, including those by some party executives, are made in behalf of all of the republic's communists but far from all of the latter share the views expressed in them. Things which a significant part of the republic's population does not accept are offered up as being the opinion of all Estonian people, including attitudes toward the draft laws on amendments to the USSR Constitution and on elections of peoples deputies. The language law, speakers have said, is directed at cleansing the Russian-language population out of Estonia. The question put to Estonian Communist Party Central Committee First Secretary V. Vyalyas, who attended the meeting, was this: Why is the Central Committee not reacting to the public statements of some communists who are suggesting ideas and thoughts that contradict communist ideology? Why are they not being put in their place by the Estonian Communist Party Central Committee? The enterprise's communists appealed to the Central Committee to rely upon the working class. It is the absence of such reliance, in their opinion, that has brought about the crisis in trusting the Central Committee. Ways to surmount this crisis must be sought quickly. First of all we need to concentrate attention on solving economic and social problems, while solution of the entire complex of problems concerned with international relations should be postponed until an appropriate plenum of the CPSU Central Committee. We need to do away with the dissidence in the republic's party organization; it is not yet too late to prevent dissidence in the Estonian Komsomol as well.

Having listened carefully to the opinions of the audience, V. M. Chebrikov said:

"Someone asked here whether or not information on what is going on in your republic is reaching the CPSU Central Committee and its Politburo. I must say that we are informed on the situation, we know about it. That this is so is evident to some extent from my visit, the purpose of which is to tour the enterprises, the farms and the institutions, and to meet with party activists, the creative intelligentsia and all strata of the population, in order to feel the pulse of the republic's life more deeply.

"A week ago Comrade Vyalyas visited the CPSU Central Committee, and he and I talked about the work that has to be done in the future; as you know, it was recently that he assumed his position. The Council of Ministers met with Comrade Ryzhkov in the country's Supreme Soviet. Thus the situation is known, and I would like to begin with its causes.

"There are probably several of them," noted the CPSU Central Committee secretary. "But two require special emphasis. The first cause lies in the fact that for a long time the republic's party organization has been but a reactor to events, it has not anticipated them with its party influence, with its explanatory and educational work, with its exactingness. The party generally supports the growing activity of the laborers throughout the entire country. We have many informal groups and other associations, and analysis of their activities shows that in their overwhelming majority they are working for restructuring. We feel that the process of democratization that is presently occurring is positive and proper. But unfortunately there are forces which are parasitizing this process and behaving improperly. And here we find that the republic's party organization was slow in recognizing the germ of this negative phenomenon, and it was slow in answering the questions that arose. A number of party executives failed to go to the collectives, they failed to communicate with communists, they failed to communicate with the people: For practical purposes they sat the storm out in their offices, looking on from the sidelines. But we cannot blame Comrade Vyalyas for all of this today, because he has only been working a few months, and he is doing whatever he can under these conditions. He has his plans, and the Estonian Communist Party Central Committee Buro has its plans as to the direction in which the subsequent work is to take. Consequently this blame must be placed upon those who had worked here previously, and upon some who are still working here today.

"The second cause is that the work being done by the party organization of your republic with the Russian-speaking population has been weak, and in a number of places it has simply been poor. The Estonian Communist Party Central Committee is now drawing up a number of measures to activate work among this part of the working class and the intelligentsia.

"I could cite a few more causes, but these are perhaps the main ones."

Comrade Chebrikov went on to discuss the problem of national dissidence raised by the participants of the meeting, and their assessment of the situation as being catastrophic or critical.

"Here," he said, "I would like to caution you not to become carried away with emotional assessments and emotional ways of dealing with things, and not to generalize isolated facts, raising them to the level of phenomena. What do we need to do right now? Both the

Estonian part of the population, and the Russian-speaking part of the population, if I may call it that, need to begin a profound effort of consolidation. Only here can the solution be found.

"Arguing will settle nothing. The main task facing the republic today is consolidation. The roots of the friendship between Estonian and Russian peoples are deep. There are no grounds for dissidence and dispute.

"I have to note that some of the proposals that have come in from Estonia and other places contain very many positive things. Therefore to sweep away everything once and for all, as is sometimes done, is not the right method, this is not the way things should be done. But we also encounter demands and appeals which require a rebuff. And it must be given. Primarily to extremism. And this rebuff must be given not only by individual party organizations but also by the Estonian Communist Party as a whole.

"I would not want our meeting to incite emotions, though I am not about to create the appearance that nothing of this sort is happening. I am not belittling the situation. But once again I must emphasize that we need to base what we do on real life. The process has begun, the process is under way. We cannot understate its importance, but we should not overstate its importance either. Why it began, I already said. The important thing now is this: What is to be done next? There is but one way—consolidation.

"What are my wishes? That the leadership of the plant and its party, trade union and Komsomol organizations should set the tone in this direction.

"As far as the work of the mass media is concerned, I would like to say the following. On the whole they are doing great and useful work. But judging from the criticism that was directed today at the republic's press, it needs to be more objective, it must reflect the entire diversity of points of view, in the spirit of socialist pluralism.

"We also spoke today about the draft language law. In the form in which it exists now, it requires serious reworking. But we must talk about the essentials, rather than attaching labels, since this only aggravates the situation. A CPSU Central Committee decree on preparations for a CPSU Central Committee plenum on the nationalities question will be published tomorrow. The language issue will be discussed as well. This is not just your own, purely regional problem. In the preparations for the plenum we will gather together all proposals, and we will seek the advice of theoreticians and practical workers, and representatives of all union republics. And after the plenum develops the policy line, we will be able to tackle this law as well." (Applause in the audience).

"The draft laws on amendments and additions to the USSR Constitution and elections of USSR peoples deputies submitted for discussion are but the first stage in the great work of improving the country's political system. Without a doubt, the draft laws are not absolutely perfect. This is precisely why they were submitted for discussion by all the people. All proposals and remarks will be examined most attentively, and accounted for to the maximum. In the next stages we will adopt legislative acts on problems concerned with the rights and independence of the republics. Great, difficult work is proceeding; the correct solutions need to be found, so as to help us travel the road of restructuring, the road charted by the 19th All-Union Party Conference."

Concluding, V. M. Chebrikov said:

"I think that the party, including the Estonian Communist Party, has sufficient personnel, devotion to the cause, and the people's trust in order to solve all problems. But life is always putting new problems on the agenda. And I ask you to help the republic party organization in consolidating forces."

Estonian Communist Party Central Committee First Secretary V. Vyalyas spoke at the conclusion of the meeting.

"Forgive me, comrades," he said, "for beginning my statement with the emotional, the subjective aspect of it all. This is not appropriate to the situation as it stands, but being the first secretary of the Estonian Communist Party Central Committee, there is nothing else I can do. How many of you here are veterans who have been working since 1960? (Hands went up in the audience). Who of you—and I have spoken at this plant on several occasions during my years of work as the first secretary of the Tallinn City Party Committee and secretary of the Estonian Communist Party Central Committee—could say that I ever acted in opposition to the party, that I ever made political mistakes?"

(Voices from the audience: "No one! Never!")

"Now the second question: I have been working in the republic for but a few months. Prior to this, at the will of the party I was sent to Nicaragua for 41 hours, where internationalism was being tested not in words but in deeds. And no one reproached me of its absence.

"Today I am entitled to ask this question of many communists present here: And where were you when these processes began in the republic?"

"We spoke about the language law. It does in fact contain many blunders, and they need to be worked out. But have you taken heed of the fact that since 1980, party documents of the Central Committee have been published only in Russian?"

(Voices from the audience: "That's an outrage!")

"There were many such outrages. And Viktor Mikhaylovich was correct in saying that we need to deeply analyze their causes.

"I was not intending to speak about this, but I must respond to the chairman of the Komsomol committee, who expressed concern for the future of this youth organization in the republic: R. Ristlaan, who never was in the Komsomol, served as Estonian Communist Party Central Committee ideology secretary for almost 10 years. I also am concerned by Komsomol affairs in the republic.

"Perhaps the Estonian Communist Party made personnel errors as well, and serious ones at that. We could go on about them for a long time. We tried to analyze the situation at a Central Committee plenum. We encouraged the extensive participation of party activists. We even allowed the director of Dvigatel to speak.

"Now, as far as the mass media. Here as well, many things have accumulated that need to be corrected now. In the months that I have been working in the republic, we have fortified a number of editorial offices with more personnel, including Estonian radio and television. Things are not going smoothly everywhere yet. You can't just snap your fingers and make everything right. But the Central Committee will continue to pursue this line firmly. We have had many press conferences. We have conducted frank discussions in adherence to party principles. One thing we have not yet been able to avoid is anger-provoking expressions. We forget that as Lenin emphasized, national feelings are those in man which are the most vulnerable.

"It is true that a very grave situation, and I would say in many ways a crisis situation, has evolved in the republic. The future depends in many ways on our abilities, on our responsibility.

"I will not repeat the things that Viktor Mikhaylovich already talked about. We conducted a very frank discussion in the CPSU Central Committee. In my radio and television statements I have already discussed my meetings with M. S. Gorbachev, to whom I described the situation in the republic, and our initiatives, including republic cost accounting and self-financing, in very great detail. As you can see, they were supported and reflected in documents of the 19th All-Union Party Conference. We came to the conference with the unified platform of the Estonian Communist Party, and this platform is the basis of our activity.

"Today's meeting was very useful to me. And this is hardly the first meeting I have had with the working class. On the third day after I was elected first secretary of the Estonian Communist Party Central Committee I met in Tartu with the secretaries of the party organizations of all industrial enterprises, and then there were

meetings with workers in Kokhtla-Yarva, in Narva and at the Tallinn Machine Building Plant. So as you can see, I have not forgotten about the working class.

"I would like to recall that the 'Dvigatel' plant gave us K. Vennikas, the first Red Guards soldier from Estonia, I. Rabchinskiy, the chairman of the revolutionary committee, and I. Lauristin, the first chairman of the Estonian SSR Council of Peoples Commissars; it gave us A. Gendrikson, a prominent official of the workers movement. This has always been a collective with tremendous internationalist traditions. And we are equally responsible for their preservation and development.

"It is very easy to tune oneself to a negative way of thinking, and it is a very bad thing when emotions take the upper hand, since later on it is sometimes hard to put things right.

"As far as the republic party organization is concerned, I firmly declare that the Central Committee will allow no extremism of any kind in relations between nationalities. The main line of the Estonian Communist Party Central Committee today is consolidation, consolidation of the entire party organization, because our party is structured not on the basis of the nationalities principle but on the basis of Marxism-Leninism."

The "Dvigatel" plant was also visited together with comrades Chebrikov and Vyalyas by K. Kortelainen, by E.-A. Sillari, deputy chairman of the Estonian SSR Council of Ministers, by Estonian SSR State Committee for Industry Chairman V. Veskivyal, and by D. Visnapuu, first secretary of the Morskoy Rayon Estonian Communist Party Committee in Tallinn.

Vyalyas Addresses Estonian Aktiv During Chebrikov Visit

*18000216 Tallinn SOVETSKAYA ESTONIYA
in Russian 15 Nov 88 pp 1, 2*

[Speech given by V. Vyalyas, Estonian CP Central Committee first secretary, to Estonian CP Central Committee: "Acting Together, With a High Degree of Responsibility and a Clean Conscience"]

[Excerpt] Representatives of the party, soviet economic and ideological aktiv met with members of the Estonian Communist Party Central Committee Buro and V.M. Chebrikov, CPSU Central Committee secretary and Politburo member, on 14 November in the Estonian Communist Party Central Committee.

The first secretaries of party gorkoms and raykoms, chairmen of gorispolkoms and rayispolkoms, deputy chairmen of the ESSR Council of Ministers, Estonian Communist Party Central Committee department heads, republic ministers and chairmen of republic state committees, Estonian Komsomol Central Committee secretaries, representatives of the scientific and creative

intelligentsia, the leaders and secretaries of party organizations of a number of enterprises and farms, representatives of social movements, servicemen, and workers in the mass information media participated in the meeting.

V. Vyalyas, Estonian Communist Party Central Committee first secretary, opened the meeting. He also gave a speech on the situation in the republic and the Estonian Communist Party's work to solve the imminent tasks of restructuring.

"We have gathered here today," said Comrade Vyalyas, "in order to meet together with a member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo, CPSU Central Committee Secretary V.M. Chebrikov, to study and consider the situation which has taken shape in Estonia. It must be stated that clarity has already been brought to many problems by the recently published materials of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo on the course of the discussion in the country of the draft laws on changes and amendments to the USSR Constitution, the elections of people's deputies of the USSR, and the CPSU Central Committee resolution on the preparation for a CPSU Central Committee plenum on the problems of ethnic relations.

Our country is faced with many urgent problems, the solution to which perestroyka is called upon to provide. These are our common problems, but, in manifesting in Estonia, they sometimes take on a special slant under the conditions of the national republic. The underlying reasons for most of the tensions were shaped in the past, in the half-truths and the silence, in the mistakes and shortcomings which were made then. Naturally, the radical break in the relations which have formed, in our customary style of life, also apply to this.

Decisions of a programmatic nature for our restructuring affect everything. The discussion of the draft all-Union laws and the Law on Language has merely become a reason to manifest sometimes chronic diseases.

Today, however, the situation is already different in many ways. The Estonian Communist Party has a policy line which was developed at the 11th Central Committee Plenum and has found broad support, based on the decisions of the 19th All-Union Party Conference. This is our principle course and we will not deviate from it. We sense and value highly the trust and support of the CPSU Central Committee and the Central Committee Politburo for the course which we have taken towards renovation and support of restructuring. We value the fact that trusting working dialogues and business-like comradely contacts in the discussion of everything taking place in Estonia have taken shape. We have honestly informed the CPSU Central Committee about the development of processes, and have brought up a number of urgent problems which need solution. We have found understanding in the Central Committee, and we have obtained the necessary advice and assistance.

We realize that, regardless of the complexity of the situation, it is necessary to maintain a calm, constructive approach, the feeling of comradeship and party principle-mindedness. In present situation, it is intolerable to be sharply categorical and to make ultimatums, hasty accusations and demands. The resolution of differences in opinion can be based only on sensible compromises, on the truth of alternatives, and on the consolidation, I repeat, the consolidation of all forces which support restructuring, including in Estonia. We understand that the reform of the political system in the Soviet Union is imminent. We realize the need for changes in the Constitution and for the development of a new Law on Elections. This must all be done in a well-considered fashion, foreseeing all possible consequences and, most importantly, taking the suggestions and opinions of the working people into account.

Thanks to the party's course toward restructuring, the Estonian people's belief in socialism, undermined by Stalinism and the long years of stagnation, has begun to be restored and strengthened. The 19th All-Union Party Conference and the 11th Estonian Communist Party Central Committee Plenum, which discussed its results, have clearly indicated that we will be able to overcome the problems which have built up over many years. The hopes of the Estonian people, included in the platform of our delegation to the 19th All-Union Party Conference, found support and were reflected in its resolutions. The expansion of sovereignty and the independence of the Union republics, the democratization of social life and genuine glasnost, the policy of creating a legitimate state—these and many other processes also fully conform to the interests of Estonia and the aspirations of our people. These processes have been developed persistently and have inspired ever new hopes. However, events occurred in October and early November which, in many people's minds, signified a halt in the process of democratization. The USSR Supreme Soviet passed a law on using the special troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and on the procedure for holding gatherings and demonstrations. Naturally, we all realize that the people ought to have legal guarantees. Under our conditions, such steps were not taken, as a necessity, and for this reason many of our deputies, expressing the voters' will, voted against it. The draft amendment to the Constitution and the holding of elections strengthened the alarm of ordinary citizens, our scientists, the creative intelligentsia and publicists, who saw a narrowing of the republic's rights to solve its own problems in the changing situation.

Sometimes we do not comprehend these documents as we should, we do not consider the stage-by-stage nature of the transformations which are being carried out. Most participants in the discussion found in the drafts a tendency towards the further centralization of economic and political power and towards a sharp strengthening in the role of centralized departments, which contradicts the spirit of the 19th Party Conference and the 11th Estonian Communist Party Central Committee Plenum.

Representatives of our republic's society were not involved to the proper extent in working out the draft laws. A fear also exists that the passing of these laws will put the implementation of the ideas of republic cost-accounting under attack. Right now, this is the main program that possess the people's minds, since it promises an integral and comprehensive solution to many problems. So it was. However, the latest CPSU Central Committee documents have explained a great deal to us and have revealed a picture for the stage-by-stage solution of these difficult problems.

In Estonia, the party's course towards restructuring, towards a return to the Leninist principles of building the state, was accepted sincerely and ardently. In speaking of the Leninist principles of federalism, the people have turned to the idea of a new Union Contract, the establishment of fundamentally new, free relations between Union republics and central authorities, based on equal rights. Today, these aspirations have found approval in the CPSU Central Committee resolution on preparations for the plenum, which emphasizes: "It is necessary to take energetic actions and to remove urgent questions which are complicating the situation, particularly in the social sphere and in the development of national culture and language." However, before this document came out, the fear had arisen that our hopes would be set aside indefinitely.

In recognizing the grounds for the peoples' anxiety, the leadership of the Estonian Communist Party Central Committee has taken active measures. We have explained the situation in the republic to the central Union authorities. Along with Comrade Toom, we met with the CPSU Central Committee and USSR Council of Ministers. Comrade Ryuytel talked to the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium. Representatives of our Popular Front also participated in the work of a commission of the Supreme Soviet Council of Nationalities, in which the draft laws were discussed. This was all quite useful. We have openly informed the people of the republic of this.

It can be said that our appeals have not gone without making their mark, and that our concerns were understood. As noted by the report on the 10 November CPSU Central Committee Politburo meeting, "many of the suggestions which have been received belong within the framework of questions, related to implementing the tasks of the first stage of the reform, in which only those amendments, on the basis of which the reorganization of the higher bodies of power should be carried out and the Law on the Procedure for Election of People's Deputies should be adopted, are intended to be introduced to the Constitution." The other large tasks "are intended to be solved in the subsequent stages of political transformation."

However, the people naturally want to make their own suggestions. Today, we are acting together with the broad public of the republic.

The representative commission, formed by the Estonian Communist Party Central Committee, led by Comrade Ryuytel, concluded in the course of discussing the suggestions which have been received that a number of the statutes in the draft laws on amendments to the Constitution and on elections do not conform to the status of a sovereign republic or to prospects for the development of political and economic democracy. It was deemed necessary to make changes in the draft Law on Elections of People's Deputies, which would ensure the preservation of the share of deputies from the Union republics in the country's higher bodies of state power. The USSR Supreme Soviet has expressed a desire to form, on a parity basis, a commission made up of representatives of the Union republics in order to definitively work through the amendments to the Constitution, and the ESSR Supreme Soviet has recommended creating a commission to make changes and amendments to the ESSR Constitution, involving the broad public in this work. Today, I think it can be said that things are occurring in an essentially constructive spirit.

As everyone knows, these days the CPSU Central Committee has considered the course of preparation for the CPSU Central Committee Plenum "On Improving International Relations in the Soviet Union," which will be held in mid-1989. The CPSU Central Committee has deemed it necessary to gather suggestions regarding changes and amendments to existing legislation which regulates the question of national relations, including basic problems, such as improving the legal status of the Union republics and clearly defining the powers of the USSR and of the Union republics. Measures have been stipulated on the preparation of draft laws which ensure the free development and use of languages of the peoples of the USSR, as well as of a draft Law on Citizenship in the USSR.

At the last meeting with the party aktiv, I relayed the words of M.S. Gorbachev, who said that one of the greatest riches of the Soviet Union is our multi-national society, the diversity of our nations, national cultures and national languages. This is an intransigent value for which each of us bears responsibility, and which we should develop.

Our well-reasoned suggestions should be a result of this constructive approach, which forms the basis for the Estonian Communist Party Central Committee's work to solve key problems.

Restructuring, begun in Moscow in 1985 by the March and April CPSU Central Committee Plenums, has found fertile soil in Estonia. The people have interpreted it as an opportunity for a new renaissance and for creative work in the name of a better future, in the name of socialism.

Over the past years profound problems have formed in many areas, of which, unquestionably, the central problem is the question of the Estonian people's future.

As a consequence of migration, the share of Estonians has gradually declined and the real danger has arisen that a million people will end up being a minority in their own historic homeland, and that their language will be displaced out of use.

The main reason for the present-day anxiety in Estonia is the uncertainty of Estonians and their well-founded concern for their own fate, for the fate of their language and culture. Hence, the 11th Estonian Communist Party Central Committee Plenum decided to support the adoption of laws on language and citizenship. As you see, this has been reflected in the resolutions of the CPSU Central Committee. Through political means, this is returning a feeling of certainty to Estonians and creating opportunities for developing culture, for equalizing the demographic situation in Estonia, and for more deeply integrating the representatives of other nationalities into the social and cultural life of the republic, because we all live on the Estonian land.

The second profound problem is the question of Estonian sovereignty, which has taken on particular significance precisely today, when the draft laws on changes to the Constitution and on elections of people's deputies are being discussed. It is impossible to understand the people's attitude towards it fully without considering the historical background.

The Estonian SSR is a sovereign national republic, which means that the Estonian SSR is part of the USSR and, in its own development, it is based on cooperation on an equal-rights basis with other Union republics and on normal dealings with the foreign world. We believe that the political basis for this cooperation should be the improvement of the Soviet Socialist Federation—the Union Contract, which legalizes the rights and responsibilities of the Union republics and ensures a conversion to a legitimate state structured on socialist legality, the main postulate of the 19th All-Union Party Conference.

For us, this has yet another essential aspect: it would be a reliable guarantee of cost-accounting. Improvement of the economic situation in Estonia is inconceivable without sovereignty and the further development of the legal status of Union republics.

It is entirely obvious that the success or failure of restructuring in all areas of life depends in many ways on the economy. However, unfortunately, for the time being the development of production forces in Estonia has occurred primarily proceeding from the interests of Union departments. Normal inter-republic economic cooperation is lacking, and a unified logic for the development of industry is absent. The influence of party and soviet agencies and of the republic's government is too small, in order to reasonably oppose the non-entitled interests of Union ministries and departments.

The idea of republic full cost-accounting has developed into the programmatic position of our people and of the Estonian Communist Party, which was reflected in the platform of the Estonian Communist Party for the 19th All-Union Party Conference and in the documents of the 11th Estonian Communist Party Central Committee Plenum. Republic cost-accounting in no way stipulates weakening the Soviet Union, as a unified whole, but, to the contrary, having structured interrelations among Union republics on the basis of new, equivalent grounds, we will strengthen the unity of the Union republics on a new level.

In our opinion, it is precisely the democratization of the administration of society and the decentralization of power, also supported by the 19th All-Union Party Conference, which are the prerequisite for achieving a high living standard for the entire population of the Soviet country. However, to put it directly, our desire to be on our own and aspiration for independence are being treated differently both beyond the borders of the republic, as well as in the republic itself. This is due to our failure to develop the question. In most cases, these incorrect interpretations are being transplanted into national soil. Numerous ill-considered speeches, both public, as well as in the press, have provided a definite subject for this. In spite of everything, contradictions are showing through this lack of understanding which are entirely unrelated to the different nationalities, but do relate to the attitude towards restructuring. Some people want to develop the creative initiative of the people, while others stand staunchly for the status quo: let everything be exactly the way it was, let the center decide for us.

We realize that a departmental orientation has been characteristic of the management of large Union plants. However, it is time to admit that we are living in Estonia nonetheless, and that these enterprises are not the local representatives of departments.

Let us recall how sharply Gorbachev criticized the work of the Union ministries in Siberia and their narrow departmental approaches, during his recent visit to Krasnoyarskiy Kray. We would like to see an understanding of our problems and a greater orientation towards the social and economic needs of Estonia on the part of Union enterprises. This is a establishment of fact, a requirement of the times.

It must be taken into account that the Russian-speaking population in Estonia has its own specific features. It is essentially newly arrived, concentrated in large industrial cities, and a significant part of it works in the large Union enterprises, separated in practice from the republic's national economic complex, which sometimes stipulates particular social and cultural characteristics. This is a considerable shortcoming, or to put it more severely, a mistake on the part of the republic's past leadership. We should correct it through joint efforts.

In principle, from the very start of restructuring, the Estonian- and Russian-speaking segments of the population had a broad base for cooperation, for a unified front, since economic and social problems are identically urgent for all residents of the republic.

The main cause of the latest outburst of emotions was the draft Law on Language. Inarguably, the draft has still not been thoroughly worked out, for which reason national discussion exists. There are formulations within it which could be interpreted differently. It is no accident that many non-native residents, even without the tense atmosphere, saw a confirmation of their fears and an infringement on their rights in the draft Law on Language, although the commission on the development of the draft, unquestionably, did not pursue this end. The 11th Estonian Communist Party Central Committee Plenum very firmly stated: the Russian language has been and remains the language for international relations, and is the native language of hundreds of thousands of Estonian residents. This is obvious and no one intends to change this reality. Indeed, it would be impossible. The place and role of the Russian language must be clearly defined, and this must be formulated and reinforced in law.

It is also obvious that it would be unrealistic to convert everywhere, moreover in a short time period, to business in the Estonian language, especially technical business, and in cities such as Narva, Paldiski, Sillamya and in many enterprises it is even inconceivable right now. However, even there, Estonians should have the possibility to conduct business in their native language.

The Estonian Communist Party guarantees that not a single social problem, including the language problem, will be solved in the republic without considering those whom it affects. However, this does not mean that everything can remain as it was. Knowledge of the Estonian and Russian languages should become, in our republic, a part of the professional skills of people working in the social sphere and in multinational collectives. We must patiently explain to those who do not understand this, or for the time being do not want to understand, that only having strengthened the shaken certainty of Estonians in the preservation of their national culture and language in their own ancient land, we are thus also strengthening the certainty of all others who live together with us in the republic. This is the fundamental position of the 11th Estonian Communist Party Central Committee Plenum. There will be no stepping backwards from this. The Estonian language will have the status of a state language. We all need political stability.

Some people still primitively interpret the term internationalism to mean fitting everyone into the same mold, a mechanical merging of peoples. This approach objectively leads not to convergence, but to divergence. This is

essentially a path to the same model of unified barracks-like socialism which, in the course of restructuring, we are now condemning and uprooting from the consciousness of our activity.

Over the last half-year, the political persona of our society has changed considerably. This raises entirely new requirements for the party and requires fundamentally new approaches and work style. In this new society, the party will be able to preserve the pluralism of its leading position only if it becomes the guiding force of restructuring, supporting political initiatives, only if it is able to focus the policy of restructuring under a single banner, to ensure a unified understanding by all communists, and above all by those who actively work in the new social movements and formations, of the essence of this policy.

Before the 11th Estonian Communist Party Central Committee Plenum, the party consulted with the people and listened to the opinions of the working people. Virtually all Central Committee members participated in preparation for the plenum. Our leaders met with workers, peasants and the intelligentsia and, as a result, the positions expressed at the plenum were formed. We support this course today as well. Our efforts will be fruitless if they lack the support of the working people.

One of the wickedest enemies against the consolidation of our efforts and the implementation of a unified party political line was popularism. Certain activists, advanced by the new movements and organizations, had claimed a monopolistic right for themselves to speak in the name of the people, to appeal to the people, to proclaim, for purposes of gaining attention, ultimatums which sometimes lead to an impasse, to make sometimes ambiguous speeches which give rise to rumors and the failure to think things through.

Appropriating a monopolistic right for oneself to speak in the name of the people is an unworthy policy of vestiges of the past. A democratic society will not tolerate demagoguery. All who would provoke the people, in the name of the people, must bear responsibility for the consequences of their actions before these very same people, and communists must bear responsibility before the party as well.

At this time, the actions of some leaders and communists at individual enterprises, the mood in their collectives, and the mood of ethnic confrontation, is causing particular concern. The party cannot accept this.

The restoration of the authority and capability of the Estonian Communist Party is an important prerequisite for fulfilling the function placed on us in society. In the course of restructuring, the CPSU has voiced support for pluralism both in thoughts as well as action. We have held extensive discussions in the party and intend to continue them. Regardless of this, we are a Union of like-minded people, not simply a debate club or social

movement. In the process of democratization, socialist pluralism has been incorrectly interpreted by some party members. An understanding has arisen that the party includes all movements existing in our society within itself, to put it figuratively, from wall to wall. This is an entirely incorrect understanding. In the party, we are militant comrades-in-arms, ideologically like-minded people.

It must be stated especially clearly that we in the party are like-minded people, and neither nationality nor membership in one department or Union enterprise or another should divide us. The important thing in the party is our principles, our ideology, the Statutes and devotion to our common work.

The phenomena of popularism in the party have become very dangerous. We realize that young politicians and some leaders of social movements are trying to evoke the sympathy of the people and are using popularity as a political device. However, if cheap appeals to the masses are disseminated, instead of balanced actions that take political realities into consideration, things are bad. A politician should be able to soberly evaluate a situation, effectively reacting to the mood of the people, and should not be guided by emotions. This is particularly important with regard to the ethnic question.

Right now, reports are being heard and new officials are being elected in the rayon and city organizations. Almost everywhere, several candidates are being nominated for the posts of first secretaries, secretaries and members of raykoms and gorkoms. The cadres of party leaders are being renovated. We will be able to implement restructuring only together with the people. The renovation of the party apparatus has also begun. However, it is far from finished. In order to do this, extensive opportunities are being created by new norms which regulate the formation of the apparatus, which significantly increases the efficiency of the city and rayon party unit, since we are gaining an opportunity to staff the apparatus with more competent cadres. All of this should affect the increase of the authority of the Estonian Communist Party, and all communists are equally answerable for this authority.

I have concisely formulated the position and basic directions of the actions of the Estonian Communist Party Central Committee, our nearest and more distant goals and tasks.

These are: cooperation in establishing regional cost-accounting, implementing political reform along the path of creating a legitimate state, solving imminent and, as it would seem, fairly complex and contradictory problems of the ethnic relations, including the status of the Estonian language and republic citizenship without encroaching upon anyone's rights, and integrating the efforts of all nationalities living in Estonia to overcome

our common difficulties. This means reinforcing attention to social problems, health-care, education and ecology. The program of actions is extensive and requires the consolidation of all residents, all working people of the republic, and the elimination of any extremism, no matter what guise it is hidden under. This should become the vital work of every communist.

We will also turn to the central authorities for advice and support, and we will appeal to them with our suggestions, well-reasoned and supported by the people. We will constantly consult with the people in everything, for, as Vladimir Ilich Lenin said, the party can only lead when it correctly expresses that which the people realize. However, we realize that care should also be taken so that the people's consciousness and their minds are not troubled by irresponsible demagoguery and excessive emotions.

Comrades! The situation is complex. However, there is no sense in dramatizing it. Balance, trust and mutual understanding are needed in the search for compromises, in order to ensure long-term solutions which will create a feeling among us of certainty in the improvement of our life. In order to do this, we must all see ourselves as comrades in the party and act with a high degree of responsibility and a clean conscience before the party and before the entire people.

TuSSR: Statistics on Economic, Social Developments

18300122 Ashkhabad *TURKMENSKAYA ISKRA*
in Russian 27 Oct 88 pp 2-3

[Turkmeninform report: "In the Turkmen SSR Council of Ministers." Also includes "Facts and Figures" segment from same issue]

[Text] The Turkmen SSR Council of Ministers met on 25 October to discuss the course of fulfillment of the State Plan for economic and social development of the republic for the period of January-September 1988. It also defined measures for the successful completion of the third year of the 12th Five-Year Plan and the provision of stable operation of the national economy in 1989.

It was noted at the meeting that the intensive work performed in the republic on implementing the tasks presented by the party on accelerating socio-economic development and intensifying the process of democratization of society, the ever broader participation of the workers in the management of the economy, and the increased political and labor activity of all strata of the population in the struggle for a fitting celebration of the 71st anniversary of Great October have yielded positive results in the fulfillment of plan tasks set in 1988.

During the elapsed period of the year, the rate of growth in volume of industrial production comprised 4.9 percent as compared with January- September of 1987,

instead of the 4.4 percent computed by the plan for 1988. All of this growth was achieved due to increased labor productivity. The responsibilities in accordance with concluded agreements were 99.3 percent fulfilled, as opposed to 98.7 percent for the 9 months of 1987.

The tasks on the production of consumer goods and provision of paid consumer services have been fulfilled.

The plan assignment has been met, and last year's level of cargo shipments by general use transport has been exceeded.

Certain positive results have been achieved in the agroindustrial complex. The kolkhozes and sovkhoses have increased the sale of livestock and poultry, milk and eggs to the state. The supply of vegetables to the all-union fund has increased. The rate of cotton procurement exceeds last year's.

The processing sectors of Gosagroprom have fulfilled the plan for the reporting period for cotton fiber, sausage products, canned meats, commercial fish products, animal fat, whole milk products, flour, groats, and certain other types of products.

The scope of housing and social-cultural facilities construction has increased. State centralized capital investments and capital from enterprise funds have been used to build and introduce into operation 465,800 square meters of housing, which is almost 31,000 square meters more than specified in the plan for this period. The plans for introduction of general education schools, children's preschool institutions, hospitals and polyclinics have been overfulfilled.

A number of measures for increasing the labor wage have been implemented. Public consumption funds have increased.

At the same time, there are serious shortcomings in the work of numerous ministries, departments, and oblsolkoms on the fulfillment of tasks set for the current year. This has a negative effect on the development of the national economy as a whole.

It was noted at the meeting that the capacities of the new economic management mechanism are not yet being utilized in full measure. The planned volumes of production of a number of important types of industrial products have not yet been provided, including those listed by nomenclature of state order. This in turn has affected the fulfillment of contract responsibilities on deliveries. Within the sphere of industrial enterprises operating under conditions of full cost accounting and self-financing, this indicator is fulfilled by 98.9 percent. Contract discipline was disrupted by almost one-fourth of the enterprises, shorting the consumers by 14 million rubles worth of production.

The labor collectives which are working under the new conditions of economic management have made insufficient use of the intensive factors of development. While on the whole throughout industry the entire increase in production has been obtained due to the growth in labor productivity, in the enterprises of this sphere it has been only 73 percent.

The Turkmen SSR Council of Ministers pointed out to the managers of the union-subordinated associations and enterprises and of the oblgorrayispolkoms their unsatisfactory fulfillment of the task set by the republic's government resolution on additionally increasing the production of consumer goods and involving in the sphere of commodity production the enterprises which are not engaged in the manufacture of these goods.

In a number of cases, the fulfillment of the plan for production of consumer goods is implemented due to production of goods with the index "N" and high fashion goods, whose prices considerably exceed the average price level for analogous goods. Thus, the overall volume of output of goods in light industry by the enterprises of the TuSSR Minlegprom [Ministry of Light Industry] has increased by 17.2 percent, including 16 percent for goods with index "N", and by 4.2 times for high-fashion products.

The republic's kolkhozes and sovkhoses are still weakly utilizing their capacities for the realization of the 30-percent plan volume of procurement of garden-raised produce and other products. Thus, only 4.9 percent of the vegetables, 8.2 percent of the melons, and 0.5 percent of the grapes out of the entire amount procured are sold at the kolkhoz markets.

The state of affairs with fulfillment of the plan for development of the social-cultural sphere was comprehensively reviewed. The meeting pointed out the low efficiency and ineffectiveness of measures taken by the TuSSR Mintorg [Ministry of Trade], Turkmenpotrebsoyuz [Turkmen Consumer's Union], the oblsolkoms and organizations, and the institutions of state trade and consumer cooperatives toward fulfilling the plan for retail commodity turnover.

The TuSSR Council of Ministers demanded that the ministries and departments take exhaustive measures for fulfilling the tasks set for the 4th quarter and for 1988 as a whole. Here it was stressed that in order to achieve the planned rates of growth in production volume in the final quarter it will be necessary to bring the rates of growth in average daily output volume of industrial products up to 4.5 percent.

The TuSSR Council of Ministers obligated the ministries and departments and the ispolkoms of local soviets to take under strict control the completion of the preparation of housing-communal and energetic management for the fall-winter period.

The republic's government ordered the ministries and departments to see that the enterprises and associations complete their work on concluding economic agreements for the upcoming year in the shortest possible time, and that they strengthen and expand the direct ties between consumers and product manufacturers.

The ministries, departments and local soviet ispolkoms have been given the task of ensuring the accelerated operational introduction of fixed capital, and of concentrating forces and funds on the most vital production facilities. At the same time, one of the main problems must be solved—that is, the total fulfillment of the program for housing construction and the strengthening of the material base for the social- cultural sphere.

The need was stressed for actively utilizing all capacities for increasing the production of consumer goods and services and for improving the supply of food products and other high quality goods to the public.

The TuSSR Council of Ministers, based on the evaluations and conclusions given at the meeting of the USSR Council of Ministers on the state of affairs in the processing sectors of the agroindustrial complex, focused the attention of the ministries, departments, ispolkoms of local soviets, and all economic management organs on the fact that the re- tooling of these sectors on a current technical basis, and the effective solution to the problem of storage, transport and processing of farm products is a pressing task.

The TuSSR Council of Ministers stressed that, in light of the decisions of the 19th All-Union CPSU Conference and subsequent Plenums of the CPSU Central Committee and the Turkmenistan CP Central Committee, it is necessary to intensify the labor rhythm, to organize precise and well- ordered work at all sectors of production for purposes of unconditional fulfillment of the tasks for the current year, for the creation of the necessary stockpiles for continued dynamic development of the national economy in 1989, and for increasing on this basis the well-being of the Soviet people.

A. Khodzhamuradov, chairman of the TuSSR Council of Ministers and member of the Turkmenistan CP Central Committee Buro, spoke at the meeting.

"Today the economy cannot successfully move ahead without the widespread introduction of achievements in scientific-technical progress," said A. Khodzhamuradov. "Unfortunately, new technological processes, automated lines, and modern equipment are not being utilized in full measure in the republic. It is enough to say that three-fourths of the republic's ministries and departments have not dealt with this question in the elapsed period. Reconstruction and technical retooling of enterprises are proceeding slowly. Only 68 percent of the capital investments which have been allocated for these purposes have been assimilated.

In their race for profits, the Minlegprom enterprises manufacture only expensive products, to the detriment of cheaper goods and children's goods, and are not concerned with expanding the product assortment.

All this evokes well-justified public criticism and gives rise to numerous complains. Today we must show greater concern for the needs of the people, improve the quality of consumer goods, and expand the sphere of services. Only under these conditions is it possible to fulfill the tasks outlined by the 27th CPSU Congress, the 19th All-Union Party Conference, and the 23rd Congress of the Turkmenistan Communist Party.

Facts and Figures

—On 27 October 1924, as a result of the national-territorial division of Soviet Central Asia, the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic was formed and became a part of the USSR.

—Today there are representatives of over 100 nationalities and peoples living in the republic, whose area comprises 448,100 square kilometers. Their overall population numbers 3,449,600 people.

—The republic's banner bears three orders, awarded for achievements in socialist construction. Twice, in 1957 and 1984, Turkmenistan was awarded the order of Lenin. In 1977 the republic was awarded the Order of the Friendship of Peoples, and in 1974—the Order of the October Revolution.

—The overall volume of fixed capital in the republic's national economy by the end of 1987 reached 21,866 million rubles, which is 6.5 times higher than the level for 1965 and 61.9 percent higher than the 1980 indicator. The productivity of social labor over the past 17 years has increased by 3.9 percent.

—129,000 tons of oil, 2.5 million kilowatt-hours of electrical energy, 17,700 tons of cotton fiber—these production indicators were achieved on the territory of present-day Turkmenistan in 1913. Already by 1940 the young Soviet republic increased the extraction of oil by 5 times, the production of electrical energy—by 33 times, and the production of cotton fiber—by 4 times. Twenty years later the volume of industrial production in the republic increased by 3.4 times.

—The fixed production capital in industry in 1980 increased by 6.4 times as compared with 1960. The overall volume of industrial production in 1987 exceeded the results achieved in 1940 by 14.5 times. In 2 years of the 12th Five-Year Plan the volume of industrial production in the republic increased by 8.9 percent.

- In 1987, 26 enterprises were operating on full cost accounting and self-financing. As of 1988, 60 associations and enterprises manufacturing over 40 percent of the entire volume of products are operating under these conditions.
- The areas sown to all agricultural crops in 1987 comprised 1,221,600 hectares in 1987. As compared with 1924, the production of raw cotton has increased by 35.3 times, of vegetables—by 70.8 times, of fruits and berries—by 57.5 times, and of grain crops—by 2.3 times.
- Secondary general education schools to accommodate 61,500 students have been introduced, as well as children's preschool institutions for 17,200 pupils, vocational technical schools for 4,970 students, hospitals with 1,631 beds, and polyclinics to accommodate 3,810 walk-in patients.
- By the beginning of the current year, there were 59 scientific institutions operating in the republic, including VUZes, and there were 5,600 scientific and scientific-pedagogical workers and specialists. A significant portion of the scientific workers are women. Among them there are 25 doctors of sciences and 600 candidates of sciences.
- As a result of the introduction of scientific-technical measures, by the middle of last year the republic's enterprises had 557 mechanized flow lines and automatic lines, and 516 shops and sectors were mechanized and automated. In the past 2 years alone, thanks to the scientific developments, the series production of 1,130 titles of new types of products was assimilated.
- The transport network in the republic reached 16,600 kilometers in 1987. Shipping by all types of transport comprised 254.8 million tons, and had increased by 24 times as compared with 1940.
- In 1987 public transport had served 325.6 million people. The volume of passenger trips for air transport reached 2.1 million people.
- Real per capita income last year comprised 1041.7 rubles. With the growth of this income, payments and benefits received by the population from the public consumption funds are increasing. In 1987 the sum of benefits payments comprised 1.3 million rubles. The primary share of these was directed toward the development of education, public health, social provision and social security.
- According to last year's summaries, the volume of retail trade comprised 2.8 million rubles, which is 12 percent higher than the 1985 level.
- In 1987 consumer service enterprises supplied 102.2 million rubles worth of services to the population. The assortment of these services reached 600 varieties.

—By 1988, the urban public housing fund will be improved with water lines by 78.3 percent, and with gas—by 24.9 percent. By the beginning of the current year the republic's housing fund comprised 35.6 million square meters. The average housing provision per republic resident comprised 10.4 square meters in 1987.

Gruzinform Report on Abkhaz ASSR Plenum
18300120a Tbilisi ZARYA VOSTOKA in Russian
1 Oct 88 pp 2-3

[Gruzinform report on Abkhaz ASSR Party Plenum: "To Deepen Restructuring and Improve Party Guidance of It"]

[Text] The Abkhaz Obkom Party Plenum held on 27 September wholly and completely approved the principles and conclusions of the 19th All-Union Party Conference, pronounced the current stage of organizational and political work decisive with regard to their implementation and acceleration and renewal in all aspects of life in our autonomous republic.

The plenum discussed the Abkhaz Party Organization's tasks with regard to practical realization of the decisions of the 19th All-Union Party Conference, the July 1988 CPSU Central Committee Plenum and the 11th Georgian CP Plenum. The report was presented by B. V. Adleyb, candidate member of the Georgian CP Central Committee and first secretary of the Abkhaz Party Obkom.

D. I. Patiashvili, first secretary of the Georgian CP Central Committee, addressed the plenum.

In the report and speeches serious problems were brought up and one could sense concern for the success of the oblast party organization's efforts at this latest stage of restructuring. And this atmosphere was completely in keeping with the spirit of the party conference and the July CPSU Central Committee Plenum.

It was noted at the plenum that the CPSU Central Committee Politburo and Comrade M. S. Gorbachev, its General Secretary, are doing everything they can to further the cause of restructuring and overcome the resistance and inertia of conservative forces, as was encountered during a recent trip around Krasnoyarsk Kray. It is our political, moral and patriotic duty, stressed the orators, to give application of our efforts a great practical orientation as possible, instill personal initiative, interest and creative energy into each matter, for only thus is it possible to hasten concrete results from restructuring. Today this is the central issue in both economics and politics.

Literally every day restructuring presents the Georgian and Abkhaz party organizations, soviet and economic organs and public organizations with tasks which require in-depth consideration, an exchange of opinions, joint efforts and the collective experience of all communists.

Therefore the obkom plenum provided a good opportunity to continue the dialogue on certain key problems that was begun at the 11th Georgian CP Central Committee Plenum and discussed at the party conference and provided needed clarifications on a number of pressing matters that are of interest to the public. Today trust and sincerity are extremely necessary for maximum consolidation of all society's political forces on a restructuring platform, for the fostering of an atmosphere of genuine internationalism and brotherhood among peoples, as these are the principal foundation of our multiethnic state's development.

Also noted were the considerable contributions of the Abkhaz Oblast party organization both toward acceleration of the rate of social and economic development and in the realm of internationalist and moral training. Many difficult issues underwent a sort of confirmation at the plenum. At times this was a rather bitter experience, yet valuable lessons were drawn from that experience, lessons that have been taken into account in the work of our republic's other party organizations. Therefore particularly much is expected of the Abkhaz Oblast Party Organization, results of the highest quality, especially since Abkhazia is for many tens of thousands of people their first introduction to our country and our republic.

It was particularly emphasized at the plenum that recent years, a time when the well-known CPSU Central Committee, USSR Council of Ministers and Georgian CP Central Committee resolutions on Abkhazia as well as a resolution concerning the development of Gudautskiy and Ochamchirskiy rayons and the cities of Sukhumi and Tkvarcheli were all adopted, are of tremendous significance. Realization of these resolutions has created a certain social, economic and political basis and a scientific and educational foundation for restructuring. A tremendous amount of work has been done, and this has to a large extent determined the specific nature of all organizational and political work by the oblast party organization over the past decade.

It was noted with satisfaction that in the course of realizing these measures Abkhazia has advanced to a leading position in our republic with respect to the growth rate of industrial and agricultural production, its capital-labor and energy-labor ratios, turnover of goods and provision of services, indices in the social and cultural realm and per capita income and in some cases substantially exceeds republic averages; employment has increased, skilled cadres are being trained locally, and the number of blue-and white-collar workers and specialists with higher and secondary specialized education is increasing. Major progress has been made in the development of science, culture and language and in the formation of public and ethnic self-awareness.

After noting these things plenum participants underscored the need to take a businesslike look at certain problems underlying many disproportions and contradictions and to determine where there is still evidence of

divergence between words and actions, between the way in which certain matters are formulated and the way they are realized in practice. In view of labor collectives' expanding independence and self-management and as restructuring and the introduction of elements of regional cost-accounting proceed it is very important that we constantly ponder whether we have actually overcome the parasitic sentiments and approaches that have literally become part of some people's flesh and blood, whether we have matured to the point where we can perform various tasks. We must also ponder how to prepare most quickly the appropriate organizational and professional basis and develop among cadres proper economic responsibility, a trait in which some people today are seriously deficient.

Political phrases and demagoguery, groundless claims and ambitions are especially dangerous now; so that we do not make errors all processes and phenomena should be examined only as part of a complex, from a realistic historical perspective, using dialectical approaches, and with the emphasis in all matter placed primarily on the people's fundamental interests and the outlook for their long-range spiritual and political development.

Unfortunately there have been quite a few instances of the appropriate administrative organs and individual administrators failing to demonstrate an adequate degree of responsibility. For instance, the acuteness of certain social problems in our autonomous republic is common knowledge, despite the progress that has been made; in particular, these problems lie in the areas of housing and social, cultural and domestic facilities. Serious complaints on this score are justified. Yet at the same time over the past 10 years a total of 165 million rubles of capital investment funds went unutilized; this is equal to the total capital investment amount for one year. Thus, 35.3 million rubles were not utilized in the area of housing construction, 6.5 million rubles in the field of health care, approximately five million rubles in education, 1.1 million rubles earmarked for culture, 17.8 million rubles for municipal services, and two million rubles in highway construction funds.

Simple calculations will show that, for example, an additional 2,000 apartments could have been built, thereby fully meeting the requirements of invalids and participants in the Great Patriotic War, the families of persons killed in the war, residents of Sukhumi who have been on the waiting list for housing since 1954-59, and hundreds of other people on the waiting list.

Such important and prestigious projects as the Press House, the Infectious Diseases Hospital and the House of Radio and Television Broadcasting have gone far beyond their construction deadlines. It is true that objective factors also contribute to this situation, yet a great deal of effort, time and money has been wasted on account of low standards and poor organizational work at the local level.

The best indication of new economic thinking is consistency in the implementation of radical economic reform, a successful transition to new methods of management, cost-accounting and self-financing. However, the process of improvement in Abkhazia's financial situation is still proceeding too slowly. Throughout our republic as a whole the financial situation remains worrisome. In spite of a program approved by a Central Committee plenum defaulting on bank loans was reduced over a seven-month period by only 2.4 million rubles instead of the planned 43 million; goals designed to reduce excessive wastage of goods and materials were met by only 67.5 percent; the program goal for reduction of indebtedness was met by only 55.7 percent. The cash flow situation has worsened.

To a large extent this is the result of failure to make changes, a low level of discipline in carrying out assignments, a low level of labor culture and undervaluation of the role of labor collectives. There is still much inertia and foot-dragging in management style at a number of enterprises; this has had an especially negative effect on the introduction of self-financing and cost-accounting. The following example was cited: barring any radical turnaround the Kindgskaya Poultry Factory will have to operate for several decades before it can even pay for itself.

The Babusherskiy Wood Processing Combine, the Sukhumi Canning Plant, the Ochamchira Tea Factories Production Association, the Sukhumi Fish Combine and even Abkhazstroy Trust #6, our autonomous republic's principal construction organization, as well as several other enterprises, are all essentially bankrupt or on the verge of bankruptcy.

It was noted at the plenum that questions of regional independence are now being brought up for discussion. This is definitely correct; this is one of the requirements of restructuring. But it was stressed that this sort of independence cannot be limited solely to administrative activity, to the right to make decisions independently, while continuing to cling to old positions and manifest a parasitic mentality in everything pertaining to performance discipline, self-support, self-financing and convincing economic results, which are the only basis for genuine self-management.

Overall reform will not proceed without proper economic responsibility on the part of regions, without consistent application of the principle of "to each according to his labor" and regional cost-accounting. The system must be organized in such a way that the working people of the republic and each oblast, city and rayon are well aware of how much their region produces, what its contribution to the country's economy is and what return it receives, and what they can realistically expect. In this respect not only external effects but also consideration of all factors and all funds spent to achieve a given result are important. Sober economic reckoning is needed.

The facts cited at the plenum concerning Abkhazia's development were quite noteworthy. Over the past 10 years approximately 700 million rubles have been invested in the social and economic development of this autonomous republic, this being in addition to regular budget allocations. Incidentally, the budget of the Abkhaz ASSR is growing at a faster rate than the State Budget of the GSSR and supplementary funding is constantly being allocated. Beginning next year a new system of budget planning is going to be introduced. Under this system the amount of money allocated to local budgets will be linked to the end results of economic activity. This is a major step in the direction of regional cost-accounting; without a radical turnaround in their financial situation enterprises and organizations could find themselves faced with great difficulties obtaining financing not only for the social realm but also for production activity.

Very many problems remain, particularly in the service sector and the areas of consumer goods production and food production. During the first two years of the 12th Five-Year Plan the people of our autonomous republic failed to receive goods worth over 120 million rubles that they should have received. Plan goals governing retail trade and household services are not being met. A serious shortfall has already emerged in the income section of the cash plan, and above-plan expenditures have amounted to tens of millions of rubles in just eight months. Yet at the same time time-studies and inspections conducted on the trade network indicate that there is a large amount of unaccounted-for goods and a lack of basic discipline and culture in contacts with customers. Specific examples were cited of goods being delivered to the trade network without invoices. Given these conditions, how can anyone talk about a cash plan? The Sukhumi Party Gorkom and the appropriate organs must monitor these processes more closely.

This summer, at the height of the resort season, a study of trade services provided to seashore visitors was conducted. Under the new conditions resort regions have wider opportunities to expand their commercial activities and demonstrate entrepreneurial skill and initiative. However, it turns out that they are still making only very poor use of these opportunities. The assortment of goods available for relaxation and sports is not broad enough, although it is literally impossible to keep them on the shelves when they are available. Neither industry nor the trade system are making the fullest possible use of the rights that have been granted them. Cooperatives are helping to some extent, but also not with enough confidence. And the assortment of goods they offer is quite limited and their conditions far from optimum; in some cases they simply have no place to do business.

Some plainly dubious operations are also being allowed to go on. Some people are already taking advantages of all the loopholes they can find. For instance, the Koooperator Trade and Purchasing Cooperative in Tkvarcheli was ostensibly established for the purpose of helping

local people market their surplus agricultural products. But in fact during the month of August the cooperative procured, at least according to its records, almost 236 metric tons of grapes and 27 metric tons of plums in Central Asia at a cost of over 250,000 rubles and sold them in Orenburg Oblast through the trade and purchasing base of the oblast consumers' union. Yet here locally the cooperative is being paid over 220,000 rubles in ready cash, while the cash plan remains unfulfilled.

It is no wonder that the staff of the Tkvarcheli branch of the republic Promstroybank had doubts about the propriety of this sort of "commercial transaction." This was a recently-established cooperative with only a few members. It had not even been able to get a loan, yet suddenly here it was carrying out such a large-scale operation. But this did not bother either N. Kharbediy, chairman of the Tkvarcheli Gorispolkom, or A. Kubrav, acting city procurator, who absolutely insisted on paying the money. They were also not bothered by the fact that cooperative chairman V. Dzhopua had twice been convicted of burglary, robbery and hooliganism. Was that perhaps the reason his actions were so brazen? The Tkvarcheli Gorkom as well as the party obkom need to take a close look at this case and generally become much better acquainted with the cooperative movement in our autonomous republic, plenum participants demanded.

Speakers underscored the fact that no tangible progress has been made in the public food service network. One still sees meager rations often lacking either fresh vegetables or fruits, and unsanitary conditions persist. The fruit and vegetable trade is in a similar state. Whereas there is at least a minimal selection of goods in small consumers' cooperative stores, the situation is much worse at state fruit and vegetables stores.

Our autonomous republic produces between eight and 14 percent of the food that it consumes. Last year, for example, approximately 60 percent of all meat and meat products sold here were imported, as was 88.5 percent of the cheese, 80 percent of all milk and milk products, almost 70 percent of fish products and all vegetable oil, pasta and flour. Of course, the importation of many products, a wide-ranging exchange of goods and specialization are all natural and to be expected within the framework of the unified economic complex and inter-regional division of labor, which encourage optimum utilization of local resources. Both the country as a whole and our republic and its people profit by this. However, on several points we could do much better, particularly with regard to food production, by making fuller and more efficient use of the resources we do have.

Criticism was also levelled at certain comrades on account of their persistent failure to meet their plan goals for the production of basic foodstuffs, including grain, vegetables, grapes and citrus fruits. The eight-month plan goal for the sale of cattle, poultry and milk to the

state was not met. Plenum participants wanted to know what is going to happen when all agricultural enterprises go to full cost-accounting starting in January 1989?

The answer to this problem is innovative, pattern-breaking approaches. What are needed are revolutionary measures that will bring workers closer to the land and make them truly its masters and create a connection between their labor and its end results and between their conscience, the amount of work they do and the material benefits they reap. In this connection the dissemination of various forms of lease contracts is taking on particular significance today, particularly long-term lease contracts. These yield an unsurpassed effect in places where people become seriously established on the land for a long period of time. Examples were cited of some cost-accounting brigades and family-run farms where labor productivity and crop yield shot up despite a reduction in the number of laborers and a marked decrease in physical and financial outlays. For example, this was the experience of cattle breeders in a brigade headed by Comrade Chkheidze at the Kolkhoz imeni Myasnikov in Gulripshskiy Rayon and of other brigades. This highly effective approach received the approval of delegates to the 19th Party Conference.

Unfortunately this progressive form of labor is not being introduced rapidly in Abkhazia. Here we have only 73 brigades, or 2.2 percent of the total, working on a lease basis, although 42 percent of all farms in our autonomous republic produce low profits or actually lose money. During the 1984-87 period alone these farms received approximately 40 million rubles of funding out of the State Budget, yet their profit plan is still not being fulfilled.

All these matters were discussed in detail by the plenum because, on the one hand, they are being urgently raised by life itself and by sociopolitical realities. On the other hand, it is no secret that union and republic organs have received a number of letters from Abkhazia in which certain aspects of our autonomous republic's socioeconomic and sociopolitical life were criticized. We cannot agree with all the ideas expressed, particularly in view of the major steps that have been taken in Abkhazia over the past decade to resolve a number of basic problems relative to the development of the economy and national culture. Therefore plenum participants attempted to take an objective and in-depth look at this criticism as a whole and at its most characteristic points.

Above all it was emphasized that a number of the critical comments actually pertained to specific individuals who carry out policy at the local level rather than to republic organs. Other comments contained criticism of shortcomings that are typical of our entire country's economic and social system. These shortcomings are being discussed openly and in a principled manner as a result of restructuring, and it is an obvious manifestation of narrow-minded regionalism to ascribe some ethnic specificity to them. Finally, there were certain questions to

which clear, objective replies have already been given or which are currently under consideration, as they require a thoughtful approach, caution, painstaking work and, of course, a certain amount of time to resolve.

The oblast aktiv was well informed concerning all these issues so that its members would be able to provide clarifications in a timely manner to party members and the general public.

Above all in this area there was evidence of a serious lack of attention to ideological-educational, propaganda and explanatory work. Once again it was stressed that any and all problems pertaining to the spheres of national interests require an especially well-balanced, cautious approach and in-depth analysis because they affect a very sensitive and susceptible area. Therefore the essence of socialist internationalism is a sensitive, attentive attitude toward the needs of all ethnic groups without exception.

Demographic problems have priority. The attention devoted to them is understandable, but there are absolutely no grounds whatsoever to support claims that people from other regions are allegedly being resettled in Abkhazia. There has been no planned resettlement of families into or out of Abkhazia for over 20 years. Furthermore, not even workers selected through organized labor recruitment programs are sent here from other regions of the country.

The GSSR CP Central Committee and the republic government have in recent years attempted in every way possible to facilitate accelerated economic and social growth of autonomous formations and regions with a multiethnic population. Much is being done to improve education and culture, the training of national cadres and the spiritual development of the people. Yet obviously no city or rayon is isolated from the outside world, and free movement of Soviet citizens within our country's territory is one of their basic constitutional rights. Generally speaking it is time we finally realized that all manifestations of nationalistic narrow-mindedness set our society very far back, depriving it of an influx of new ideas, knowledge and the cultural treasures of civilization. In this respect as well we are today reinterpreting certain ideological distortions of the stagnation period, e.g. exaltation of our indisputable advantages to the whole world.

As regards regulation of migrational processes, local authorities already possess sufficient rights and opportunities for doing so. We need only make skillful and honest use of them, for instance by correlating a region's need for specialists with its actual ability to provide them with jobs and living essentials. According to a regional diagram of population distribution that has been drawn up for the year 2000, Abkhazia's estimated population will be 600,000, with this increase resulting from natural population growth.

Now let us consider living conditions. The aforementioned diagram rejects the concept of primarily developing industrial giants and major resort complexes in our ASSR and emphasizes instead environmental protection, qualitative improvements in the service sector and improvement of the entire social infrastructure, including the resort and tourist industry.

As for matters pertaining to resort construction in the narrowest sense of the word—this is an especially timely problem in Abkhazia—quite a few serious comments were made on this subject. Much construction remains unsystematic and poorly planned, resulting in increased ecological pressure on the land and at times leading to delays in the construction of facilities that are of vital importance to the native population. Therefore primary emphasis will now be placed on all-round improvement of resort services, development of the entire resort infrastructure and solutions to a number of social problems by these means rather than on extensive construction of new resorts.

Sometimes even the most basic order is lacking in this regard. Inspections conducted by Abkhaz Council of Ministers commissions alone turned up flagrant violations in procedures used to procure land for the construction of resorts, illegal transfers of resort land and facilities from one department's supervision to another, unauthorized establishment of health resorts, acquisition of private homes and establishment of rest homes in them, failure to utilize land set aside for resort construction, changes in the function of resort facilities without proper authorization, and failure to comply with the requirements of the sanitary and epidemiological station and the State Fire Safety Inspectorate. Not to mention the fact that all these unauthorized facilities also lack the most basic conditions required to comply with sanitary and living requirements.

Thus, the Abkhaz Council of Ministers set aside a tract of land in the settlement of Leselidze for the construction of a Pioneer camp by the Rostov Obkom of the Agricultural and Procurement Workers' Trade Union. Subsequently for some unexplained reason all the facilities and the land itself were turned over to the Donmyasoprom Interfarm Association of Rostov, but this time as a health resort; some time later this was in turn put under the jurisdiction of Batayskiy Sovkhoz, then of Sovkhoz imeni 50th Anniversary of the USSR. At the present time it belongs to the Zimnekovskiy Meat Sovkhoz, its fifth owner. A total lack of monitoring combined with official complicity. Construction work proceeded in a chaotic fashion; an adjoining piece of property 1.7 hectares in area was arbitrarily annexed and a 120-person dormitory built on it. The buildings and grounds are in an unbelievably neglected state. Therefore the completely justified decision was made to shut down this "vacation camp."

However, the problem is that cases of this sort are not isolated ones. Flagrant violations of the law were committed by the ispolkom of the Gudautskiy Raysovet; it

actually facilitated the illegal establishment of a departmental vacation camp by the Belgorod Tsentrmetallurgmontazh Trust on a tract of land set aside for the Gudauta Consumer Services Administration for the construction of a motorists' campground. The Almaz departmental guest house, under the jurisdiction of the USSR Ministry of Electrical Equipment Industry's All-Union Electrical Machinery Research Institute, was built in a gorge on the Ryapsh River near the village of Agaraki (Gudautskiy Rayon) with the permission of the board of Kolkhoz imeni Shaumyan and the Gudautskiy Raysovet Ispolkom, but without proper documentation and authorization. The Nevskiy departmental guest house was established with the complicity of the Ochamchira Gorsovet. In connection with this it was discovered that a private individual had been permitted to sell his private home in the city of Ochamchira... to Leningrad Bus Enterprise #3. The Abkhaz Council of Ministers had uncovered a number of similarly flagrant violations in Sukhumi and in Sukhumskiy, Gulripshskiy and Galskiy rayons. During 1985 and 1986 alone 17 illegally established facilities with beds for almost 3,000 persons were shut down.

Some leaders have stooped so low as to auction off land, their most precious possession, in exchange for things like a tractor, or pipe, metal or wood for their farms, i.e. for the sake of their immediate interests, to gain some petty benefit. Who gave them the right to do that? How could they sell such bountiful, precious land for a cubic meter of wood or a ton of metal?

All decisions concerning land use should be reached collectively and after public discussion.

According to the most modest estimates there are approximately 9,000 illegal or semi-legal tourist beds in every description of departmental facilities in our republic. In the places where these guests houses are located basic ecological and sanitary requirements are generally not met, not to mention the fact that they lack worthwhile and properly organized leisure activities. We can also add that all these beds are not included in State Statistical Committee calculations and thus are not planned for; their owners do not make the contributions to local budgets that they should. Yet they do consume food resources. According to experts' most modest estimates losses from this source amount to at least four million rubles each season. And that at a time when both Abkhazia and Georgia as a whole are having such major problems with cash flow and cash plan goals are not being met.

The Abkhaz Council of Ministers should continue to take completely objective and principled measures with regard to these matters.

Another important socioeconomic problem that was raised with urgency was environmental protection. As fully empowered organs of people's power soviets should take control of the implementation of environmental

protection. Approximately 33 million rubles were spent in Abkhazia during the 11th Five-Year Plan and the first part of the 12th Five-Year Plan for the construction of water treatment facilities alone. Some are still under construction in the coastal area of Gulripshskiy Rayon. In the city of Ochamchira a central waste water collector, a pumping station and a sewage system are being built at a cost of 20 million rubles. Treatment facilities in the Gagra-Pitsunda-Bzybskiy industrial region are now operating at their full planned capacity. These and other measures have made possible a reduction in the release of untreated waste water by a factor of more than 15 over the past decade. Substantial progress has also been made with regard to prevention of air pollution and protection of forests. The network of state nature preserves has been expanded to 61,000 hectares. By a decision of the GSSR Council of Ministers unique parks like Novyy Afon Park, the Sukhumi Dendrological Park, Gagra Central Park, and the Gagra Subtropical Sovkhoz Park have been declared monuments of history and culture.

Approximately 30 million rubles have been spent to restore Abkhazia's beaches and landscape. The establishment of the Gruzmorberegozashchita [Georgian Seashore Protection] Association has allowed this work to be put on a firm footing. Simply amazing results have been achieved in the Gagra zone, where in places the sea has receded by 50-100 meters. This work should be continued, expanded and given a larger scale, it was stated at the plenum.

Plenum participants also devoted a great deal of attention to such priority areas of ethnic interests as science, culture and education. Testimony to Abkhazia's growing creative, cultural and scientific potential is the mere fact that over the past decade approximately 300 million rubles have been spent for social and cultural purposes. Any republic in our country would be envious of a sum that large. Questions were raised concerning improved protection of historical and cultural monuments; this matters are currently being resolved through improvements in the administrative structure.

Everyone takes sincere pride in the achievements of Abkhazia's scientific and creative intelligentsia. However, restructuring presents us with such high goals and political and moral objectives that we must constantly be searching for new ways of mobilizing our multiethnic intelligentsia to solve economic and social problems.

Serious steps have been taken in our autonomous republic in the area of higher education. Currently cadres are being given instruction in 19 special fields in Abkhaz, Georgian and Russian at the six departments and 37 subdepartments of Abkhaz State University. Much work is being done by the Georgian Institute of Subtropical Agriculture, the only one of its kind in our country.

Yet no less important, if not the top priority, is what kind of training and certification specialists undergo and how their skills are utilized. In this regard our entire

republic, Abkhazia included, can already sense overproduction of diploma-holding specialists, especially educators, as well as specialists in other fields, as restructuring makes completely new and qualitatively different demands of them. Specifically, currently there are 1,700 specialists in Abkhazia with higher and incomplete higher education who are unemployed, as well as almost 2,000 with secondary specialized education. Yet our young people continue going to other parts of the country to gain admission to VUZs there. Often young people and their parents seek out the easy way of gaining admission and prefer those professions which they regard as lucrative. Therefore we need to establish stricter monitoring by party and soviet organs and Komsomol organizations of these matters, declared speakers at the plenum.

Our autonomous republic has shown a definite upturn in scientific and creative thinking. The breadth and depth of the topics being studied at the Abkhaz Institute of Language, Literature and History imeni D. Gulia are heartening. Along with major works of the 1960's and 1970's such as "Grammatika abkhazskogo yazyka" [A Grammar of the Abkhaz Language], "Ocherki istorii abkhazskoy literatury" [Essays on the History of Abkhaz Literature] and general works on the history of Abkhazia from ancient times to the present day, publications in recent years have included "Problemy razvitiya regionalnogo kompleksnogo khozyaystva Abkhazskoy ASSR" [Problems in the Development of a Complex Regional Economic in the Abkhaz ASSR], the first parts of "Istoriya Abkhazskoy ASSR" [The History of the Abkhaz ASSR] and "Istoriya abkhazskoy literatury" [The History of Abkhaz Literature], the "Tolkovyy slovar' abkhazskogo yazyka" [Illustrated Dictionary of the Abkhaz Language] and other valuable works. A number of works have been published in Moscow, Tbilisi and in the United States concerning the question of extreme longevity in Abkhazia, an international Soviet-American scientific topic in the discussion of which Abkhaz comrades are participating.

Many works have received wide recognition. A monograph by G. A. Dzidzariy, a corresponding member of the GSSR Academy of Sciences, entitled "Makhadzhirstvo i problem istorii Abkhazii XIX stoletiya" [The Makhadzhir Movement and Problems of 19th Century Abkhazian History] was awarded the GSSR State Prize. All-union, regional and republic scientific forums are being conducted.

Without a doubt the quality of the research work being done and the scientific work being produced need further improvement, greater practical orientation and more effective results from research.

An important place among the diverse problems upon which the attention of scientific and ideological institutes is focused is held by matters like protection and encouragement of ethnic traditions, including the development of our national languages, such an important

phenomenon. It was noted at the plenum that in recent years much has been accomplished in this regard. New curricula on Abkhaz language and literature have been developed and published; the Alashara Publishing House has published more than 40 textbook titles and 38 titles of methodological literature. An "Uchebnyy slovar' abkhazskogo yazyka" [Student's Dictionary of the Abkhaz Language] has been published for the first time.

Educational organs have received a great deal of help from the Writers' Union, the Abkhaz Folklore Research Institute, Abkhaz Television and Radio and the departments of Abkhaz State University. However, this matter will continue to demand special attention.

At the plenum much attention was devoted to cadres, the key to restructuring. Therefore greater demands are being made with regard to the formulation of cadre policy and the training of national cadres.

The election-accounting campaign currently underway should serve as an important instrument for the promotion of new people and promising cadres. Meetings have already been held at the level of party groups and shop party organizations. It is heartening to note that in almost two-thirds of these organizations leaders were chosen from among several candidates on a secret ballot. This practice should be extended to all levels.

The other important aspect is the training of cadres in a truly internationalist spirit. Restructuring and democratization have given this aspect of work with cadres and all ideological work in general an exceptionally great and sometimes even decisive significance.

Abkhazia is a profoundly internationalist area, with over 70 ethnic groups living and working together amicably, noted plenum speakers. These peoples are noted for the sincerity and openness of their mutual relations, their mutual assistance and support and their genuine brotherhood. There are many things both in history and in everyday life that tend to draw the people residing in our autonomous republic closer together; all the peoples are doing everything they can to make Abkhazia richer and more beautiful. Social intercourse is enriched by the new colors and shades of their ethnic traditions. And, of course, this is wonderful.

However, questions of interethnic relations are so complex and delicate that they permit no complacency or inattentiveness. Anything, even the slightest provocation, can be enough to undo everything. And once that happens it is very difficult to calm the passions thereby unleashed with the voice of reason and logic. This was underscored because some questions to which an in-depth response was for some reason not made in a timely manner are suddenly starting to heat up the ideological atmosphere once again.

For example, at the present time the problem of geographical names has come to have direct ideological significance. This problem cannot simply be ignored. As a result of expanding glasnost and democracy there is greater public interest in the preservation and further development of the historical and cultural treasures of each people. This process is occurring everywhere. Hasty actions and subjectivism are not permissible in this matter. It is essential that scientists and the Academy of Scientists be involved in finding solutions to this problem. Their authoritative findings will help alleviate the problem and resolve everything on a scientific basis.

In the history, in the shining chronicle of Georgian-Abkhaz relations there are a tremendous number of instructive examples. In this connection reference was made to the numerous articles, essays, commentaries and in-depth historical and ethnographic materials on Abkhazia published in the newspaper IVERIYA under the editorial direction of Ilya Chavchavadze. As head of the Georgian Literacy Society he devoted a great deal of energy to the development of education in Abkhazia. Visiting Gagra and Sukhumi in connection with that work he wrote: "I am happy to see before me this part of our homeland that seems to have been designed by an artist's hand: Abkhazia and the marvelous people who inhabit it."

The nobility and chivalrous traditions of the Abkhaz people were the basis for a poem by Akakiy Tsereteli entitled "Educator"; it lauds the magnificent traits of the Abkhaz national character. Yakob Gogebashvili expressed many warm sentiments about Abkhazia.

There was the case of Georgiy Shervashidze (Chachba), a renowned Abkhazian poet, dramatist and publicist of the late 19th and early 20th centuries who wrote a sharp rebuttal to a certain Lorenz, who had published in Germany a malicious article about Georgia and the Georgians. The progressive Georgian public gratefully hailed Shervashidze's act.

The working people of Abkhazia have written many heroic pages in the history of the revolutionary movement and the struggle to establish Soviet power. Outstanding Abkhazians in the field of revolutionary struggle include Nestor Lakoba, Yefrem Eshba, Georgiy Atabekov, Severian Kukhaleyshvili, Nikolay Akirtava, Samson Kartoziya, Pavel Dzigua, Ignat Vardaniya, Nikolay Svanidze, Vasiliy Agrba, Isak Zhvaniya, Ivan Khioti, Maksim Gobechiya, Khadzharat Shamba, Pavel Bigvava and many others.

Dimitriy Gulia, a great son of the Abkhazian people, played a truly historical role in the strengthening of Georgian-Abkhaz relations. It is noteworthy that he was the first to translate and publish in his native language works by I. Chavchavadze and A. Tsereteli. In his childhood D. Gulia studied Georgian from Ya. Gogebashvili's textbook "Dedaena," later returning to this book on many occasions.

He was connected by a close relationship and friendship with Academician I. A. Dzhevakhishvili, at whose invitation he worked at Tbilisi University with Galaktion Tabidze, Titsian Tabidze, G. Leonidze, S. Chikovani, the flower of Georgian humanities—A. Shanidze, G. Akhvlediani, A. Chikobava, V. Topuriya and others. He established particularly close ties with Simon Dzhanashin. "The name of Dimitriy Gulia," wrote Dzhanashin's son Nikolay Simonovich, "was in our family always surrounded by profound respect for him as a great Abkhaz writer and public figure and by great love for him as a very dear human being..."

The works of D. Gulia have been repeatedly translated and published in Georgian. In one of the busy sections of Tbilisi, on the square that bears his name, a monument has been erected to the founder of Abkhazian literature, and everyone pays him a tribute of respect and love. Georgians also greatly esteem the active work of many other well-known figures in our literature, the arts and science who have made a great contribution to the strengthening of spiritual brotherhood between the Georgian and Abkhazian peoples. We must continue to augment that friendship with more and more personal contributions, said the speakers. They noted that it is our common internationalist duty today to draw strength from the fraternal unity of ethnic cultures for the sake of their mutual enrichment.

The plenum set party, soviet, trade union, Komsomol and economic organs the task of intensifying their work to establish a high level of interethnic relations culture and orient all forms of organizational- political and ideological work by party organizations toward finding solutions to social, cultural and economic problems, toward further improving internationalist and patriotic education of working people and completely satisfying the needs of all the ethnic groups that comprise the population of our autonomous republic.

The firm conviction was expressed that the communists and all the working people of our autonomous republic will exert all their strength, energy, knowledge and experience as active participants in the process of revolutionary transformations that is occurring, consistently implementing the highly important decisions made at the 19th All-Union Party Conference.

Death of MVD Conscripts Examined

Three Succumb to Heatstroke

18000176a Moscow MOSKOVSKAYA PRAVDA
in Russian 24 Sep 88 p 2

[Igor Voyevodin report: Tragedy in the Desert"]

[Text] Tashkent—Samarkand—Moscow We are not giving the names of certain officials because only the courts can find a person guilty. But we cannot remain silent: what happened must not be repeated.

A One-Way Ticket

The train traveled on and on. Relatives, friends, girlfriends were left behind, and ahead lay the unknown. Many of them had been separated from their family roots for the first time in their 18 years. But hope in their own youthful strength and in the paternal concern of their seniors and commanders drove out alarming thoughts and they amused themselves, told jokes and sang to the accompaniment of a guitar. And the train traveled on, further and further from Moscow, and outside the windows flashed a landscape known only from movies—salt marches, the occasional bush, and now the sands of a great desert.

From the materials of the criminal proceedings: "The training base was located in the Kyzylkum desert, with a dry and particularly hot climate.

"On 27 June 1987 at about 1300 hours conscripts from the central region of the USSR arrived to carry out their service. The state of health of the young soldiers was weak as a result of the everyday discomforts of the journey."

The everyday discomforts were the following: at the departure station more than twice as many conscripts were put into the car than there were seats. But early in the morning at one of the stations even more young lads were put into the car. They wanted a drink but there was no tea or drinking water and they were forced to drink water from the toilet. And the train was traveling across endless desert and a merciless sun beat down on the car.

The conscripts nevertheless did arrive at the training base and there it became clear that no one was expecting the team from Moscow since they had been informed only about the arrival of young men from Yaroslavl and Kustanay. The commander, Lt Col M., was absent from the reception point and appeared only toward evening.

On that day the future soldiers had not even been given a meal and they had washed in a shower unprotected from the sun and their hair was cut on the street using only three pairs of clippers for all of them. In all the young men spent 6 hours under the sun's scorching rays.

The conscripts stood in ranks with their newly shaved heads unprotected and watched while senior servicemen, about 15 people, who appeared as if from nowhere at the training base, sorted through their simple belongings. They collected up everything that caught their fancy—soap, shaving gear, albums and notebooks, from which they first tore out the pages with the addresses. The "grandfathers" graciously returned the address pages to the conscripts.

The sergeants who were the immediate superiors of the young soldiers watched what was happening with indifference. As before, there was insufficient water, or, more accurately, there was none at all; a broth of camel's thorn—viscous and nauseating—had been prepared to slake the thirst, but there was not enough even of this.

Some people had nosebleeds and started to faint. It was only then that the deputy commander at the training base, Major S., gave the order to bring them into the shade and give them a 40-liter cask of the broth.

Before midnight the exhausted (according to the material from the investigation "in a fatigued condition") conscripts from the Moscow command dragged cots into a barracks and set them up, made up the beds since no one had shown any concern for them since before their departure. Then finally they were given permission to sleep. But when it was still quite early, about nine in the evening, Lt Col M. and Maj S. absented themselves from the training base after reporting to the unit commander that the personnel had been received and dealt with.

From the material of the criminal investigation: "Continuing to display criminal negligence, Lt Col M. and Maj S., aware of the exhausted condition of the conscripts, and the difficult path they had traversed, and personally observing cases of fainting, took no steps to help personnel adapt to the new climatic conditions."

A Broth Made from Thorns

At that time the weather in the desert was hellish—50 degrees Celsius. Though it always is at that time of the year. But for the command staff at the training base, for which it was not the first year of service there, the problems of acclimatization of conscripts did not exist. The daily routine established beforehand was strictly observed: it started with physical exercises, cross-country running, drill practice.

Vadim Ilichev, a private discharged from the army for reasons of health resulting from what occurred, recalls what occurred:

"It happened that the drill practice took place from morning to night. This is how it was: the command comes, you raise your leg and hold it for about 20 seconds then you put it down and hold up the other one. And all this in the sun in that unbearable heat."

"Did this kind of drill practice happen often?" I asked.

"All the time."

The soldiers fainted, had nosebleeds, but one command followed another and the young soldiers carried them out at the limit of their physical strength.

The result was that already by 30 June the medical unit at the training base had dealt with about 50 men, many of them repeatedly. They also included the Muscovites privates Zakharov and Kelmanson. They had seen the doctor previously but it was only on that day that Misha Kelmanson was admitted to the medical unit; the next day Dima Zakharov and Volodya Bezverkhniy were admitted; all three were in serious condition.

Those who had not been admitted were still "treated" in the old way: a basin with water was set at the entrance to the medical unit; a towel was wetted in the basin and applied to the face of the unconscious soldier. The soldier came to and was ordered to go back.

It was not so easy to get admitted to the medical unit: the soldier's condition was first evaluated by the sergeant, and he might give the order to see the doctor, and he might not.

The soldiers fell in rank, just like in a war, but they got up again: the sun is not a bullet, it does not kill immediately... The exercises continued, the procedure was followed strictly, and as before, there was still insufficient water.

Private Sabelfeld told what had happened to him:

"I could no longer drink the broth, I felt nauseous and my nose was bleeding constantly; I lost consciousness. Others also lost consciousness but the exercises continued, as if we were being commanded by machines."

Slava Sabelfeld will be in treatment for a long time; one of his legs was partly paralyzed and he had pains in the head and heart before he came back to normal and was discharged from the army; he did not want to go home with a "white ticket."

At the command "Five minutes to fill your water bottles" the platoon flung itself on the cask with the broth and the melee started. Each man was allowed one or two water bottles a day. And the young soldiers rushed to the cask with the broth or to the faucets to get the processed water from a nearby factory to wash their plates, stampeding like cattle, losing their self-control, out of their senses. A special duty person stood by those faucets because the processed water was poisonous. But he could do nothing because the young soldiers believed just one thing: the water was life...

And Help Was Late in Coming

And how did the command at the training base react to all this? Above norm and specially to adapt the young men, and to prevent dehydration of the body, tea was obtained from the stores but neither Lt Col M. or Maj S. gave the order for it to be brewed instead of the camel thorns. Neither did they report to the unit command that soldiers were sick, and on the evenings of 30 June and 1 July they calmly went home even though the condition of the hospitalized soldiers had become critical.

From the material of the criminal proceedings: "It was only on the morning of 1 July 1987 that Private Kelmanson was admitted to the city hospital; privates Zakharov and Bezverkhniy were admitted on the morning of 2 July. However, Lt Col M. failed to report this personally to the commander. More servicemen were admitted to that hospital through 7 July with symptoms of heat exhaustion."

But before this they had been in the medical unit at the training base, where a diagnosis of diphtheria was made for Zakharov and Bezverkhniy, and of meningitis for Kelmanson. They were treated there with water for the fainting; others were treated with tablets for dysentery since this was precisely the diagnosis made most often by the physician, Lt of Medical Services Kosukhin. And there was one medicine dropper there for all the patients...

Intervention by the unit commander, Lt Col Kafman, who learned about what was happening from the other officers, finally led to a change in the daily routine and the soldiers had an opportunity to become acclimatized not only standing in ranks in the sun. But it was too late to help those who were sick. On 4 July they were transferred by plane to a hospital in the Turkestan Military District. The diagnosis was changed: it was now heatstroke, anuria, desiccation, and renal insufficiency... On 6 July Volodya Bezverkhniy died; Dima Zakharov died on 12 July, and Misha Kelmanson on 13 July.

I never met any of the deceased and perhaps would not have found out about the tragedy but for chance. Dima Zakharov's mother is a typist who works in our editorial offices. The news of the death of her son, who had been serving in the army just 2 weeks, was a shock for all of us. And what of the mothers and fathers? As I try to write without passion, relying only on the facts, I beg the forgiveness of the parents of the dead soldiers for the fact that I am unintentionally touching unhealed wounds.

Here are the words of Igor Korzhenevskiy, senior investigator of the military procuracy, lieutenant of legal services:

"For almost a year I conducted the investigation and the case now fills 15 volumes, with about 200 witnesses and 45 people who suffered in the case. We have never known anything like it. I can say with a proper sense of responsibility that this is not simply an unfortunate case..."